

## **Testimony**

### **Testimony before the Appropriations Committee**

**In Opposition to HB 6887, An Act Expanding Coverage for Mental Health Care Services and Substance Abuse Services.**

**Annette Diaz, Vernon CT**

**February 16, 2017**

**Good morning, Senator Kelly, Senator Larson, Representative Scanlon, and distinguished members of the Insurance Committee:**

**My name is Annette Diaz and I am a resident of Vernon, CT. I am here to speak on HB 6887, An Act Expanding Coverage for Mental Health Care Services and Substance Abuse Services.**

*I am in Favor of the Bill but I do have concerns of the Value of the Role of what Peers do and bring to the table. I do not wish for it to get compromised or misunderstood. I say this with obtaining a peer role myself at a LMHA and some of the things that get misunderstood are the Value of our certification, the amount of money we get paid, what is told to us as having poor boundaries or inappropriate use of our lived experience when it comes down to supervisors, co-workers or upper management not being trained to understand peer relationship dynamics. So if this bill is passed I ask that Peers be included in ALL aspects of policy planning, that they be paid what they are worth, that the positions required to have the RSS Certification by Advocacy Unlimited, that insurance companies familiarize themselves with the Peer code of ethics that goes along with the certification just as they would an LCSW or Social workers license. I would say that if those things are in place then the purpose of having peers to aid in times of emotional distress as an intervention to prevent high medical cost would work.*

**Thank you for considering my perspective.**

**Annette Diaz**